

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 /091 W
----- 083235

R 110940Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1507

INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMCONGEN HONG KONG

USLO PEKING

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 12081

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, JA, XD

SUBJECT: FOREIGN OFFICE HOLDS SOUTH ASIAN AMBASSADORIAL
CONFERENCE

SUMMARY: JAPANESE AMBASSADORS ASSIGNED TO SOUTH ASIA
MET IN TOKYO ON AUGUST 4 AND 5. IN THEIR MEETING THERE
WAS GENERAL AGREEMENT THAT THE COUNTRIES OF THE REGION
HAD ENTERED A PERIOD OF RELATIVE DOMESTIC STABILITY AND
THAT INTERNATIONALLY, THERE HAD BEEN NO DRAMATIC SHIFT IN
THE POWER BALANCE OF THE US, USSR AND PRC IN THE REGION.
THE CONFERENCE CONCLUDED WITH RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A
SLIGHTLY MORE ACTIVE JAPANESE DIPLOMATIC EFFORT IN
THE AREA. END SUMMARY.

1. THE JAPANESE AMBASSADORS TO INDIA, PAKISTAN,
NEPAL, BANGLADESH, AND SRI LANKA MET IN TOKYO AUGUST
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4 AND 5 FOR A GENERAL DISCUSSION OF CURRENT TRENDS

IN SOUTH ASIA AND TO RECOMMEND DIRECTIONS FOR JAPANESE POLICY THERE. AS THE FIRST SUCH AMBASSADORIAL CONFERENCE FOR SOUTH ASIA AS A SEPARATE AND DISTINCT REGION, THE MEETINGS WERE OPENED BY FONMIN MIYAZAWA. AT THE CLOSE OF THE CONFERENCE, THE AMBASSADORS MET BRIEFLY WITH PM MIKI.

2. ACCORDING TO FONOFF SW ASIA DIVISION (TAJIMA), THERE WAS CONSENSUS AMONG PARTICIPANTS THAT, DESPITE THE PERSISTENCE OF SERIOUS POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, THEIR RESPECTIVE COUNTRIES HAD ENTERED A PERIOD OF RELATIVE INTERNAL STABILITY. THERE WAS THE EXPECTATION THAT THE PRESENT GOVERNMENTS WOULD CONTINUE IN POWER FOR THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE, ALTHOUGH UPCOMING ELECTIONS IN SRI LANKA WERE CHARACTERIZED AS A TOSS-UP. AMBASSADOR TAKASHI SUZUKI, ASSIGNED TO DELHI, PROVIDED A PARTICULARLY UP-BEAT ASSESSMENT OF RECENT IMPROVEMENTS IN INDIA'S ECONOMY AND PUBLIC SECURITY AND PREDICTED PM GANDHI WOULD LIFT THE STATE OF EMERGENCY DECLARATION BY THE END OF THIS YEAR AND CARRY OUT A GENERAL ELECTION NEXT FEBRUARY.

3. THE AMBASSADORS ALSO NOTED RECENT DIPLOMATIC DEVELOPMENTS IN THE REGION--NOTABLY THE NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN INDIA AND PAKISTAN AND THE EXCHANGE OF AMBASSADORS BETWEEN THE PRC AND BOTH INDIA AND BANGLADESH. THE CONFERENCE CONCLUDED THAT DESPITE THESE DEVELOPMENTS, THE BASIC POWER RELATIONSHIP IN THE AREA BETWEEN THE US, USSR, AND PRC HAD NOT BEEN SERIOUSLY ALTERED AND THAT NO SINGLE GREAT POWER HAD MADE GAINS AT THE EXPENSE OF ANOTHER.

4. IN THIS CONNECTION, THE CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS DISCUSSED THE INCREASE OF SOVIET NAVAL STRENGTH IN THE INDIAN OCEAN, BUT ACCORDING TO BOTH PRESS REPORTS AND TAJIMA'S ACCOUNT, THE JAPANESE AMBASSADORS RESIDENT IN THE LITTORAL STATES DID NOT EXPRESS PARTICULAR OR IMMEDIATE CONCERN OVER THIS DEVELOPMENT INASMUCH AS THE US MAINTAINED A BALANCE. AMBASSADOR SUZUKI SUBSEQUENTLY NOTED TO JAPANESE REPORTERS THAT THE

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EXPANSION OF SOVIET ACTIVITIES IN THE AREA WOULD NOT IN HIS JUDGMENT LEAD TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SOVIET NAVAL BASES IN INDIA.

5. THERE WAS GENERAL CONCURRENCE WITHIN THE CONFERENCE THAT IRAN AND NOT THE USSR HAD PROVIDED THE EXTERNAL IMPETUS FOR THE BETTERMENT OF RELATIONS BETWEEN INDIA AND PAKISTAN.

6. AS REGARDS THE NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE CURRENTLY UNDERWAY IN COLOMBO, TAJIMA DESCRIBED THE AMBASSADORS' VIEW OF INDIA AND SRI LANKA AS MODERATING INFLUENCES AT THE CONFERENCE BUT WAS UNABLE TO PREDICT HOW THESE EFFORTS AT MODERATION WOULD BE TRANSLATED INTO ACTION ON SUCH SPECIFIC ITEMS AS THE KOREAN QUESTION. IN THEIR DISCUSSIONS WITH THE JAPANESE PRESS, THE AMBASSADORS EXPRESSED THE OPINION THAT "THE NON ALIGNED CONFERENCE THIS TIME WILL NOT PROVIDE AN ADVERSE SITUATION FOR THE FACTION SUPPORTING THE ROK." AMBASSADOR TO SRI LANKA YOSHICKA ALSO NOTED THAT DESPITE THE RESUMPTION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN SRI LANKA AND NORTH KOREA, SRI LANKA WAS CONTINUING TO MAINTAIN SOME DISTANCE, THUS FAR REFUSING TO ACCEDE TO NORTH KOREAN REQUESTS TO REOPEN THEIR EMBASSY IN COLOMBO.
SHOESMITH

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AMBASSADORS, MINISTERIAL MEETINGS, MEETING REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 AUG 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MartinML
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976TOKYO12081
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760308-1143
From: TOKYO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760862/aaaacckb.tel
Line Count: 133
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MartinML
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <07 MAY 2004 by ElyME>; APPROVED <01 SEP 2004 by MartinML>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FOREIGN OFFICE HOLDS SOUTH ASIAN AMBASSADORIAL CONFERENCE SUMMARY: JAPANESE AMBASSADORS ASSIGNED TO SOUTH AS
TAGS: PFOR, JA, XD
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006